

West Virginia Studies Resource Development

Title of Lesson: Secession Divides Virginia
Grade level: 8th Grade (West Virginia Studies)
Summary: In this lesson, students will continue to study the process by which the Southern states seceded from the Union and formed the Confederacy. The focus of this lesson will be on the idea of secession, but will also draw from prior class discussions related to the subject. This will serve to reinforce the material presented to ensure student comprehension. Students will draft statements concerning secession and present their opinions in a mock secession convention. This activity will serve to allow students the opportunity to gain an understanding of the reasons why states decided to secede, as well as the steps taken to achieve this goal.
WV CCR Social Studies Standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SS.8.22: Demonstrate an understanding of the American Civil War including its causes, effects, and the major events that led to West Virginia statehood.• Explain the effect of key events leading to western Virginia's separation from Virginia after secession (e.g., First and Second Wheeling Conventions and John Brown's Raid).• Describe the moral, ethical, and legal tensions that led to the creation of the new state of West Virginia and how these tensions were resolved (e.g., Virginia vs. West Virginia 1871).• Compare and contrast the military strategies of the North and South with regard to specific events and geographic locations in West Virginia (e.g., the Battle of Philippi, Rich Mountain, Droop Mountain, Battle of Scary Creek and Battle of Carnifex Ferry).• Identify significant contributions of men and women of West Virginia during the Civil War and identify the roles of ethnic and racial minorities.
Students will know and understand (content): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why Virginia wished to secede from the Union after the election of Abraham Lincoln and the firing of Fort Sumter• How the events of the Virginia secession convention occurred in Richmond, Virginia.• What were the views of Western Virginians and Eastern Virginians during the secession debate.• What the consequences of secession would be for the state of Virginia.• Understand the outcome of the Virginia Secession Convention.
Students will be able to do (skills): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the views of delegates from Eastern and Western Virginia during the Virginia secession convention.• Express an opinion on Virginia secession based on primary sources of delegates attending the Secession convention.• Participate in a mock Secession convention during the class period.• Write an editorial discussing views on secession in antebellum Virginia.
Materials & Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DVD Player

- Television
- Gods and Generals Film
- Blank 1861 Virginia maps
- Colored pencils
- Paper
- Pencils/Pens
- West Virginia A Film History (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWLBvkV5L5I>)

Learning Plan: Note: This lesson plan will cover multiple class periods (2-3 Class Periods)

- 1) This lesson will begin with students viewing the opening clip from the movie Gods and Generals which will serve to illustrate Virginia's opinions and actions related to secession. The link to the clip is: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLATZJnyPc>. This will serve to prepare students for the upcoming lessons and activities, as they will be working to examine the secession of Virginia, as well as its impact on western Virginia. The showing of movie clips and discussion of the clips will take approximately twenty minutes to complete.
- 2) Students will then work to examine the feelings and beliefs of various parts of Virginia on the issue of secession. To accomplish this, students will complete a map in which they will identify which counties in Virginia voted for and against secession from the United States. This activity will take about fifteen minutes to accomplish.
- 3) Show students the segment "Apply the Knife" from West Virginia A Film History. The link to the video from youtube is: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWLBvkV5L5I>.
- 4) After students have been introduced to the idea of secession in Virginia, they will be assigned to draft a statement to be made at the Virginia Secession Convention which will voice their opinions on whether they feel Virginia should secede from the Union and join the Confederacy. The statements created by the students will be used as a part of the mock Secession Convention in subsequent class periods. The introduction of this activity and beginning student work will take about fifteen minutes and will conclude this class period.

Day 2

1. Students will begin the class period by finishing their statements which they began drafting in the previous class period regarding Virginia's secession from the Union. The statements prepared by students will be presented in the mock secession convention. The completion of these statements will take approximately fifteen minutes to complete.
2. In the mock secession convention, students will present their arguments as to why Virginia should secede or why it should not. The convention will be coordinated by the instructor who will serve as the chair of the convention. Students will read their statement to the convention, which should include viable reasons to support their arguments. Students will have approximately one minute to present to the convention. The presentation of the arguments and statements on secession will take thirty-five minutes and will conclude the class period.

Day 3 (May be combined with Day 2)

1. To begin the class period, the instructor will review what the students have learned and discussed regarding secession and its relation to Virginia. The review will include information on how students viewed the issue and the general sentiment of the statements made by the students. This introduction to the day's lesson should take about ten minutes to complete.
2. The instructor will then re-engage the students in the mock secession convention by conducting a vote in the classroom in regards to whether or not Virginia should secede from the Union and join the Confederacy.

3. Once the votes are tallied, the instructor, serving as the chair of the convention, will present the results of the vote to the students. The election and presentation of the votes should take about twenty minutes and will conclude the mock convention.

4. Students will then be assigned to write an editorial to their local newspaper in 1860 as a delegate who attended the Virginia secession convention detailing the results of their mock secession convention and the impact it has on the state of Virginia and the United States. This activity will serve to conclude the mock secession convention.

Checking for Understanding:

Students will be required to complete an editorial to have Virginia support secession or remain with the Union. Students will be asked guiding questions during the activity that the teacher will use to check for student understanding. The students statements and arguments used in the mock secession conventions will also be a guide to check for student understanding during this activity.

Accommodations:

Through this lesson there are modifications that need to be made with a diverse group of students. There are modifications that are listed on specific student's IEPs in regards to this lesson and class work. It will be crucial to keep the students on task and organized during the class period. The teacher will keep the students on task by constantly walking throughout the room to check on the student's progress through the lesson and will create handouts or write lists on the white board that will direct the students step-by-step to let them know what is coming next within the class period. If students have learning disabilities in the area of reading, the teacher will modify how students will read the text selections with the text being read aloud by either the teacher or other students in the class or by using the audio recordings from the textbook if the teacher has access. The teacher will also read directions aloud and repeat the directions several times throughout the class period. Redirection will be used to keep students on task during instructional time. The teacher will walk around the room during the lesson to answer any questions one-on-one with the students and also to assist them in reading the material they may have difficulty reading. Extended time may be given to students during class activities and homework assignments if needed and recommended in their IEPs.

Higher Level Learners: Students will use the Virginia Secession Convention website (<https://secession.richmond.edu/>) and select speeches by delegates by their county and use those speeches to justify their reasoning for their support of secession or remaining with the union. The higher level students will use the speeches to by referenceing and citing the information in their class presentations.